

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 SSM-03 ACDA-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 IO-13 NSCE-00
SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 NEAE-00 /086 W
-----141612Z 064079 /45

O R 141447Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6681
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
CAIRO 6976
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION SINAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 4271

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, IS
SUBJECT: DMC COUNCIL VOTES TO SUSPEND COALITION TALKS

SUMMARY: ON THE ADVICE OF ITS NEGOTIATING TEAM, THE DMC'S
PRINCIPAL DECISION-MAKING BODY VOTED WITH VIRTUAL
UNANIMITY TO BREAK OFF COALITION TALKS PENDING A CHANGE
IN THE LIKUD'S NEGOTIATING POSITION. ALL TOP DMC LEADERS
URGED THIS ACTION, WITH AT LEAST TWO MAINTAINING THAT
BEGIN DID NOT WANT THE DMC AS A PARTNER. ALTHOUGH THE
LIKUD IS PROCEEDING WITH ITS EFFORTS TO FORM A NARROW
COALITION, LIBERAL LEADER SIMCHA EHRlich INDICATED
HIS INTENTION TO BRING YADIN BACK TO THE NEGOTIATING
TABLE, EVEN AS THE PRESS REPORTED DISTRIBUTION OF MORE
PORTFOLIOS, INCLUDING TWO THOUGHT TO BE INTENDED FOR
THE DMC. THE DMC DECISION DOES NOT FORECLOSE FURTHER
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NEGOTIATIONS IN THE FUTURE BUT DOES SERVE NOTICE THAT
THE INITIATIVE WILL HAVE TO COME FROM THE LIKUD.
THUS, IF BEGIN, IN FACT, WANTS A BROADER GOVERNMENT,
AND THIS POINT REMAINS OPEN TO QUESTION, HE WILL HAVE
TO SHOW THE FLEXIBILITY THAT HAS HERETOFORE BEEN
ABSENT FROM HIS DEALINGS WITH THE DMC. END SUMMARY.

1. BY A LOPSIDED 97 TO 2 THE DMC COUNCIL VOTED LAST NIGHT TO BREAK OFF COALITION TALKS WITH THE LIKUD. THE RESOLUTION, WHICH CAME AT THE END OF A FOUR-HOUR MEETING, GAVE THE 23 MEMBERS OF THE COMBINED DMC SECRETARIAT AND KNESSET FACTTION THE AUTHORITY TO RESUME DISCUSSIONS IF AND WHEN "NEW CONDITIONS" EMERGE WHICH WOULD ENABLE A RESUMPTION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

2. YADIN LED OFF THE SESSION WITH A STRAIGHTFORWARD REVIEW OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH LIKUD. HE THEN MADE A STRONG CASE FOR SUSPENDING TALKS, ARGUING THAT THE LIKUD WAS UNBENDING ON FOREIGN POLICY AND THAT HE EXPECTED THEM ALSO TO OPPOSE THE DMC'S DEMANDS FOR ELECTORAL REFORM. HE SAID: "AT THIS STAGE, UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO INFLUENCE THE MAJOR ISSUES."

3. YADIN WAS FOLLOWED ON THE ROSTRUM BY THE OTHER TOP LEADERS OF THE PARTY, ALL OF WHOM OPPOSED CONTINUING NEGOTIATIONS AT THIS TIME. AMNON RUBENSTEIN AND SHMUEL TAMIR WERE PARTICULARLY CAUSTIC. THEY DID NOT BELIEVE THE LIKUD REALLY WANTED THE DMC AS A COALITION PARTNER AND SPOLE STRONGLY AGAINST JOINING THE COALITION UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES. SEF WERTHEIMER SAID THAT THE LIKUD WOULD HAVE TO SOBER UP FROM THEIR CURRENT "POWER GRABBING BINGE" BEFORE THE DMC COULD CONSIDER PARTICIPATING IN THE NEW GOVERNMENT. EVEN MEIR ZOREA, A HAWK WHO WAS BELIEVED

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TO FAVOR JOINING THE COALITION, SPOKE ON BEHALF OF BREAKING OFF THE TALKS. HE DISAGREED WITH THE OPINION THAT THE LIKUD DID NOT WANT THE DMC, BUT CONTENTED THAT THE SITUATION WOULD HAVE TO CHANGE BEFORE THERE WOULD BE ANY POINT IN FURTHER TALKS.

4. MEANWHILE, INTENSE ACTIVITY CONTINUES TOWARD FORMATION OF A NARROW LIKUD-DOMINATED GOVERNMENT. NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE NRP WILL RESUME TODAY, AND THE LIKUD TEAM IS SCHEDULED TO MEET TOMORROW WITH AGUDAT YISRAEL LEADERS TO CONCLUDE THEIR COALITION AGREEMENT. BEGIN MAY ANNOUNCE HIS GOVERNMENT TOWARD THE END OF THIS WEEK; HE HAS SAID HE WILL FORMALLY PRESENT IT TO THE KNESSET ON JUNE 20.

5. LIBERAL PARTY LEADER EHRLICH THIS MORNING EXPRESSED HIS REGRET AT THE DMC'S DECISION AND SAID THAT HE WILL MAKE EFFORTS "EVEN TODAY" TO HAVE TALKS RESUMED. DESPITE REPORTS THAT THE LIKUD WILL

RESERVE SEVERAL PROTFOLIOS FOR THE DMC SHOULD IT
LATER DECIDE TO JOIN, HAARETZ REPORTS TODAY THAT
LIBERAL MK MOSHE NISSIM WILL RECEIVE THE JUSTICE
PORTFOLIO--A MINISTRY THAT HAD BEEN CONSIDEREED
AVAILABLE FOR THE DMC-- AND THAT HERUT MK DAVID LEVY,
WHO HEADS THE LIKUD'S HISTADRUT ELECTION LIST, WILL
BE MINISTER OF SOCIAL BETTERMENT--ANOTHER MINISTRY
EXPECTED TO HAVE BEEN FOR THE DMC. LA'AM MK ELIEZER
SHOSTAK WILL REPORTEDLY BE MINISTER OF HEALTH. OTHER
APPOINTMENTS RUMORED IN TODAY'S PRESS (IN ADDITION
TO WEIZMAN AS DEFENSE MINISTER, DAYAN AS FOREIGN
MINISTER, AND EHRLICH AS FINANCE MINISTER, PREVIOUSLY
REPORTED) INCLUDE LA'AM MK YIGAL HOROWITZ, MINISTER
OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY; NRP LEADER JOSEF BURG, MINISTER
OF THE INTERIOR; AND NRP MK ZVULUN HAMMER, MINISTER
OF EDUCATION. LAST NIGHT BEGIN ANNOUNCED THESE OTHER
APPOINTMENTS: HERUT MK GEULA COHEN, DEPUTY
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MINISTER OF EDUCATION; HERUT MK BRIG. GEN. (RES.)
MORDECHAI ZIPPORI, DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTER; LIBERAL
MK YEHEZKEL FLOMIN, DEPUTY FINANCE MINISTER; AND
LIKUD MK (AHDUT) HILLEL SEIDEL, DEPUTY MINISTER
IN CHARGE OF IMMIGRATION IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S
OFFICE. THE COEHN APPOINTMENT WAS APPARENTLY
ANNOUNCED WITHOUT PREVIOUS CONSULTATION WITH THE
NRP AND DREW IMMEDIATE CRITICISM FROM HAMMER.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TEL AVIV 4271

6. IN AN INTERVIEW IN TODAY'S MASS CIRCULATION DAILY, MAARIV, YADIN TOOK A VERY TOUGH LINE. HE LISTED THREE CONDITIONS FOR RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE LIKUD: (A) THE LIKUD MUST BE MORE ACCOMMODATING ON DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS ISSUES TO THE VIEWS OF THE DMC; (B) THE DMC MUST BE ASSURED THAT THE LIKUD'S AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER COALITION PARTNERS WILL NOT PRECLUDE THE DMC'S PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT; AND (C) THE LIKUD MUST UNDERSTAND THAT ASIDE FROM THE QUESTION OF PORTFOLIOS, THE DMC WILL INSIST ON COMPLIANCE WITH ITS SEVEN-POINT PROGRAM (TEL AVIV 3166). YADIN NOTED IN THE INTERVIEW THAT SOME OF THE LIKUD'S DECISIONS REGARDING FORMATION OF A GOVERNMENT HAVE ALREADY CONTRADICTED THE DMC'S PRINCIPLES ON STREAMLINING THE GOVERNMENT. HE SAID THAT THE PROPOSED GOVERNMENT DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE CONFIDENTIAL

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A FUNCTIONAL ONE. "THIS WILL HAVE TO BE CHANGED IF THEY WANT US TO RETURN TO THE NEGOTIATIONS." HE ALSO WAS SKEPTICAL OF ACCEPTANCE OF THE DMC'S DEMAND FOR ELECTORAL REFORM IN VIEW OF THE LIKUD'S COMMITMENT TO THE NERP NOT TO CONSIDER PROPOSALS IN THIS AREA WITHOUT OBTAINING THE NRP'S CONSENT.

7. COMMENT: THE DMC COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION DID NOT CLOSE THE DOOR ON PARTICIPATION, BUT IT DID SERVE NOTICE THAT THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE SOME FLEXIBILITY IN THE LIKUD'S TERMS FOR A DMC RETURN TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE. THE SIZE OF THE COUNCIL'S VOTE AND THE STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE VIEWS OF THE DMC'S NEGOTIATING TEAM, EVIDENT IN LAST NIGHT'S PROCEEDINGS, BELIE THE OFT EXPRESSED LIKUD CONVICTION THAT THE DMC'S LEADERSHIP WOULD BE UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE FROM ITS RANK AND FILE TO JOIN THE COALITION. WHILE LEAVING THEM WITH OPEN OPTIONS, THE VOTE STRENGTHENS THE HAND OF YADIN AND HIS TEAM IF, IN FACT, BEGIN REALLY WANTS THE DMC IN. THIS IS TRULY THE QUESTION, AND THE NEXT MOVE IS BEGIN'S. IT IS APPARENT THAT

BEGIN MOVED VERY LITTLE IF AT ALL IN ADDRESSING THE
DMC'S CONCERNS, EVEN WHERE SEMANTIC CHANGES MIGHT HAVE
BEEN ENOUGH TO PAPER OVER SUBSTANTIVE DIFFERENCES.
ALTHOUGH WE BELIEVE THAT AS A PARTY THE LIKUD IS
ANXIOUS TO HAVE DMC PARTICIPATION, BEGIN'S
PERFORMANCE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS INDICATES
EITHER THAT HE DOES NOT SHARE HIS PARTY'S ATTITUDE
OR THAT HE IS UNWILLING OR UNABLE EVEN TO GIVE
THE APPEARANCE OF MODIFYING HIS POSITIONS. THE
CONCLUSION PRESENTS ITSELF THAT INSPITE OF HIS
EXPANSIVE TALK OF AS WIDE A GOVERNMENT AS POSSIBLE
BEGIN DOES NOT WANT THE RESTRAINING INFLUENCE OF
A MODERATE PARTY IN HIS GOVERNMENT. HIS STERN
LEADERSHIP OF HERUT ALSO SUGGESTS THAT HE WOULD
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FEAR COMPETITION WITHIN HIS GOVERNMENT OF STRONG
MEN LIKE YADIN, RUBENSTEIN, ET AL. ONE INDEPENDANT
THINKER (DAYAN) IS ENOUGH.
LEWIS

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